



Town of North Andover Quarterly Newsletter

April 2012 - Issue 23

News from the School Department

As we enter spring, North Andover students in grades 3-8 and grade 10 are getting ready for the 2012 administration of the state MCAS tests. The schools are proud of the increasing number of students who are scoring advanced or proficient in the state testing program. Last year, students scored higher in both mathematics and language arts. In addition, significant increases occurred in the new state measurement of individual student growth.

Many students are receiving commendations in athletics, business, science and the arts. At the School Committee meeting on March 19th, the Committee recognized the following student accomplishments: **Honors Junior Music Festival:** Eleven North Andover Middle Schools students were selected to participate in the Northeastern District of the Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA) Honors Junior Music Festival. Each year MMEA holds auditions for students in grades 7-9 to participate in the honors junior music festival and the top scoring students are accepted to the festival. **Robotics Competition:** Two robotics teams from North Andover High School qualified to participate in the State Robotics Tournament held on March 10 at Andover High School. One NAHS team finished 2nd in the state. **Dramafest:** Six NAHS students received awards for their performance at the Massachusetts Education Theater Guild Drama Festival. **DECA** (Distributive Education Clubs of America): Six North Andover High School business students placed in the top ten during the recent State DECA Competition. **Winter Athletics:** For the third year in a row the wrestling team won the Division II State Championship. In addition, three members of the team won individual state championships. Boston Globe/Herald All Scholastic honors were awarded to one wrestler and one member of the boys' basketball team. Two students, one gymnast and one boys' basketball player, were named Cape Ann League MVP and NAHS Coaches were named Cape Ann League Coach of the Year for swimming, boys' indoor track and girls' indoor track.

The school administration is working closely with the School

Committee and with new Town Manager Andrew Maylor to ensure that all of our existing programs are funded in next year's budget. In addition, the administration is addressing the need for expansion of our in-district special education programs and our technology infrastructure. The school district is entering an exciting joint partnership with the Andover School district and Northern Essex Community College to provide a special education vocational skills program for students 18-22 years of age. In technology, our Capital Improvement Plan addresses the need for a robust wireless network throughout our schools. This internet infrastructure will enable our teachers and students to expand their current use of online learning resources such as Khan Academy and Google docs. The incorporation of e-books into our classroom resources has already begun to show substantial savings in individual courses at the high school and in library purchases at the middle school.

Contracts have been awarded for the three green repair program projects approved at the June 2011 Town Meeting. The projects at Atkinson, Sargent and the middle school will begin as soon as school is out [tentatively June 19, barring any weather interruptions]. These needed repair projects are 47% funded by Massachusetts School Building Authority and are designed to enhance energy efficiency.

As you may have heard, a sprinkler head discharged accidentally in the Field House at the High School in February and caused water damage. The consolidated facility manager is working closely with our insurance company to ensure that the work is done properly and as quickly as possible.

The close cooperation and consolidation of services between the schools and the municipal government is continuing. Weekly meetings and open dialogue between the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools have continued with the change of municipal administration, as has open dialogue between members of the School Committee and town administration. This continues to allow us to plan cooperatively and address issues as they arise.

News from the Town Clerk's Office

It has been a very busy time in the Town Clerk's Office with the Presidential Primary Election on March 6, 2012 with a 21% turnout. The Town Election was March 27, 2012. The moving of the polling location to the North Andover Middle School from the High School involved cooperation from the School Department, especially the Principal and staff at the Middle School and the Police Department. Relocating with all the necessary equipment would not have been possible without the efforts of our Custodial staff. We also offered tours of Election Day activities to students at the school who saw democracy in action.

There will be a Thursday September 6, 2012 State Primary Election and the Presidential Election is Tuesday November 6, 2012. If you are unable to get to the polls, please request an absentee ballot.

We are beginning the process of Annual Town Meeting preparations. The Annual Town Meeting will be held at the

North Andover High School 430 Osgood Street beginning on Tuesday June 12, 2012 at 7:00PM. The last day to register to vote at the meeting is Wednesday May 23, 2012. The Town Clerk's Office will be open until 8:00PM. Look for Town Meeting warrant updates and information on the Town's website www.townofnorthandover.com. If you need the warrant mailed to you or have any questions, please contact my office. If you need any special accommodations for the meeting please notify us.

Travel season is coming and we offer Passport Services Monday-Friday 9:00AM until 3:30PM. Forms are available in the office at 120 Main Street or visit www.travel.state.gov for forms and information on passports. Please call (978) 688-9501 with any questions or e-mail jbradshaw@townofnorthandover.com.

For more information on Town events and meetings, please visit the Town's website at www.TownOfNorthAndover.com

News from the Police Department

With the warmer weather approaching and gas prices creeping higher and higher, North Andover is already seeing an increase in bicycle traffic. From downtown, to the Old Center Common, to Lake Cochichewick, bicyclists have always enjoyed scenic rides through town. Even North Andover police officers are out on bikes in the warmer weather, patrolling downtown and areas inaccessible to cruisers, such as Weir Hill. This year North Andover police officers encourage motorists to share the road with cyclists. Recent legislation has created new laws aimed at protecting bike riders. Failing to yield to oncoming cyclists when turning, unsafe overtaking of a bicyclist, opening doors near bicyclists and other similar violations are now in effect. Operators of motor vehicles can be cited for those offenses. Meanwhile, that same legislation empowered police

officers to cite bicyclists for violations as well! Bicyclists can be written civil citations for failing to obey traffic laws such as red light violations, stop sign violations, failing to yield the right of way to vehicle traffic, and even failing to keep at least one hand on the handlebars. The message the North Andover Police Department wants to convey is safety: safety for bicyclists, safety for vehicle traffic, and safety for pedestrians. Residents are encouraged to do their part to help us achieve that goal. We would also like to remind all riders that anyone under 16 is required by law to wear a helmet, and helmets are strongly encouraged for those over the age of 16. Remember, children often learn by the examples adults set. That example should be consistent with the message we tell them: Helmets can save lives.

News from the Fire Department

For homeowners whose homes are protected with residential fire sprinklers there are a few things you should be aware of. It is the understanding of the Fire Department that several of these systems have been shut down for fear of accidental discharges. These systems are designed to slow the growth of a fire allowing the occupants to safely exit the home without injury or death. Sprinklers have been proven in saving lives during fires; they exist for the safety of all occupants including young children. It is unlawful to shutdown fire suppression equipment in the State of Ma. Some insurance policies provide for discounts for homeowners protected by sprinklers. You may want to check with your insurance company to see that they will honor a claim for homes whose systems have been shutdown. Some of these systems were installed with an additive fluid such as glycol or glycerin to prevent freezing. This additive can break down over time and lose its anti freezing ability. They need to be serviced by a licensed sprinkler contractor. Many of the accidental discharges result from freezing, often the insulation protecting those gets moved in the attic space. If these are installed properly and maintained they

should not be subject to freezing. Sprinkler pipe is not much different than any other water pipe hidden in walls and ceilings. If your system is shut off please restore it for your safety and that of your family members. Sprinklers do save lives.

Homes built earlier than 1975 were not required to install hard wired smoke alarm systems. In April of last year there was a change in the building code that requires these homes to install a particular type of detector. Detectors installed within 20 feet of a kitchen or bath rooms containing a bath or shower are required to install a detector with photo electric technology. Outside of 20 feet a photo electric is required as well as a detector with ionization technology, these detectors need to be side by side. Dual detectors are available with both technologies. The locations for these detectors are at the base of all stair cases, within 10 feet of the outside of all bedrooms and 1 minimum per each 1200 square feet of living space. Carbon monoxide detectors are required to fall within 10 feet of the outside of each bedroom and 1 minimum on each level of living space. This would include basements and attics. Call the fire prevention office for additional information.

News from the Division of Community Development

Spring in North Andover means its Tick Season!

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system. Lyme disease is diagnosed based on symptoms and physical findings such as a rash. Common symptoms are fatigue, chills, fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes. Not everyone gets the same symptoms.

Many of these symptoms will resolve over a period of weeks to months, even without treatment. However, lack of treatment can result in additional complications. If you think you are showing signs of Lyme disease, getting tested is recommended. Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics.

While it is a good idea to take preventive measures against ticks year-round, be extra vigilant in warmer months (April-September) when ticks are most active.

Steps to prevent Lyme disease include removing ticks promptly, using insect repellent and reducing tick habitat. The ticks that transmit Lyme disease can occasionally transmit other tick-borne diseases as well.

If you find an attached tick, the best way to remove it is to use fine-tipped tweezers and grasp the tick as close to the skin

surface as possible. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick (this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin). If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.

Ticks that transmit Lyme disease can take 3 or more days to feed fully. If the tick is infected, the chances of transmission increases with time, from 0% at 24 hours, 12% at 48 hours, 79% at 72 hours and 94% at 96 hours. This is the reason it is important to conduct tick checks after working or recreating in tick infected areas, removing any ticks you find promptly.

Avoid Tick Habitat: avoid wooded, bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter, and walk in the center of trails.

Use Repellents: with at least 20% DEET or products that contain permethrin on clothing. The EPA has more information on their web page at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppreff/insect/>.

Search & Destroy: conduct a body tick when returning from tick-infested areas, especially under the arms, around ears, inside belly button, behind knees, between legs and especially in your hair. Also, examine clothing, backpacks, and pets.